

Tia Griffin
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FILED

U.S FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

2017 JUN 13 PM 1:13

TIA GRIFFIN,

Plaintiff,

v.

Jordan Peele, Blumhouse
Productions, QC Entertainment,
and NBC Universal Media, LLC. ,

Defendants

CLERK U.S. DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIF.
RIVERSIDE

Case No. **EDCV17-01153** **JGB** (KKx)
BY *[Signature]*

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY COMPLAINT
FOR COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT

VERIFIED COMPLAINT

As Plaintiff, I, Tia Griffin, make my complaint and allege as follows:

I, Tia Griffin, Plaintiff, Now file my Civil Complaint regarding Copyright infringement. I will state my Cause of Action, I will provide Proof, Access and examples, and ask for Adjudicative Relief by alleging the following:

THE PARTIES - JURISDICTION AND VENUE

1. As Plaintiff, I, Tia Griffin, am the Author of the Copyrighted book called "The Covering". (Please see Exhibit A).
2. Defendants, Jordan Peele, Blumhouse Productions, QC Entertainment, and NBC Universal, LLC. are the Producer's and Production Team for the movie "Get Out". Upon information and belief, Defendants are engaged in the business of Copyright Infringement upon my copyrighted work "The Covering" and are continually using the infringed work by advertising and selling the movie commercially, to date.
3. Defendants Jordan Peele, Blumhouse Productions, QC Entertainment, and NBC Universal, LLC., production team for the movie "Get Out", have businesses and do business within this State of California and venue is proper.

4. This COMPLAINT sets forth causes of action for copyright infringement under 17 U.S. Code § 101, and 102 Part A and Part a(1) under literary copyrights, The Copyright Act of 1976, Public Law 94-553, 90 Stat 2541, and all subsequent amendments to copyright law and any amendments. Furthermore, all acts by these Defendants were made, and are continually practiced with full knowledge of the U.S. Copyright laws and Copyright Acts.

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5. This Court has original jurisdiction over the Copyright and Copyright Act of 1976, Public Law 94-553, 90 Stat 2541 . This Court further has jurisdiction under 17 U.S. Code § 101, and 102 Part A and Part a(1) under literary copyrights, and all subsequent amendments to copyright law and any amendments, and the matter of the controversy exceeds the sum or value of \$75,000, 28 USC 1332(a)(2). Defendants maintain their places of business here in the State of California. And as Plaintiff, I also reside in this State. Therefore, since this case is based upon Federal law and both myself as Plaintiff with Copyright Exclusive ownership and the Defendants who have places of business within this State, jurisdiction and venue can be considered in it's proper place in Federal District Court.

6. Venue is proper as to the copyright infringement causes of action pursuant to 28 USC 1400(a).

7. This Court has jurisdiction over the subject matter in controversy and the parties to this action. Venue is proper as to the Defendants, who reside or may be found

in this State and I as Plaintiff reside in this State and District.

COUNT I: COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT

8. Prior to Jordan Peele's copyright to his screenplay "Get Out", I, Tia Griffin and Plaintiff, who was and has always been a citizen of the United States and later a resident within the State of California, created and wrote an original work in the form of a book, entitled "The Covering".

9. The full book contained original material created by myself as Plaintiff and is copyright able subject matter under the laws of the United States.

10. At all times relevant to this action, I as Plaintiff complied in all respects with the Copyright Act of 1976 and all other laws governing Copyright, and secured the exclusive rights and privileges in and to the Copyrights to my book book called "The Covering".

11. I, Tia Griffin, Plaintiff, have received from the Register of Copyrights Certificates of Registration, dated and identified as follows:

a. TXu001922667 / 2014-05-11 (Please see Exhibit A)

Whereas, the Defendant, Jordan Peele received his copyright to his film "Get Out" 18 months later. (Please see Exhibit B)

VERIFIED COMPLAINT

12. At all times relevant to this action, I, Tia Griffin, Plaintiff have been and continue to be the sole proprietor of all rights, title and interest in and to the Copyrights for the book "The Covering".

13. Each copy of the copyrighted work of my book "The Covering" published by myself as Plaintiff and all copies made by myself as Plaintiff or under its authority had associated therewith a restrictive and exclusive copyright protection that prohibited commercial exploitation and copying any portion of the book without my granting permission to do so.

14. The Defendant Jordan Peele obtained a copyright for his screenplay called "Get Out" or "Get out of the House" PAu003809078 on 11/2/2015. After receiving this copyright, Defendants, jointly and severally, infringed upon my copyright as Plaintiff by publishing, placing on the market, and commercially exploiting works and all things pertaining to the movie "Get Out" in 2015 and currently to date illegally and without permission. The "infringing works") which were copied largely from my copyrighted work "The Covering" is just another example of three additional examples that I would like to share with the courts. As Plaintiff, I can say that this is not the first time I have experienced infringement. I bring this fact up to show examples of the same form and tactics of infringement faced in the past and ongoing with works originated and created by

myself. In describing myself as Plaintiff, I would say that I am Science, Research, Music, Design, and Faith oriented which explains how my work has come about over the years.

Examples of Infringement with no credit based on my valid copyrights filed with The Library of Congress include;

1. During my nursing study years, I obtained a copyright for my Cellular Catabolism literary work where a small portion of my process and research writings for Cellular Catabolism regarding the HIV Virus and Cancer cells, TXu000906664 / 1999-06-04 is still being mentioned and used without my permission. Yet, I receive no credit for that created process protected and published at the Library of Congress back in the 1990's. They call it "ground breaking". But they never give credit where credit is due and my Published work is NEVER mentioned. Wenhui Hu states and I quote,

"Our new study is more comprehensive," associate professor at the Temple University, Wenhui Hu, who led the study, said in a statement.

"We confirmed the data from our previous work and have improved the efficiency of our gene editing strategy. We also show that the strategy is effective in two additional mouse models, one representing acute infection in mouse cells and the other representing chronic, or latent, infection in human cells."

<http://www.msn.com/en-us/health/healthtrending/hiv-eliminated-from-humanized-mice-in-groundbreaking-study/ar-BBAEm9F?li=BBmkt5R&ocid=spartanntp>

CRISPR, described as a "molecular scissors," eliminated the virus using Ribonucleic acid (RNA) that searches for the HIV virus. Once identified, a special enzyme removed the virus from the cells. Results of the study were published in the journal Molecular Therapy.

"The next stage would be to repeat the study in primates, a more suitable animal model where HIV infection induces disease,"

He said. "Our eventual goal is a clinical trial in human patients."

Their Book: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1525001617301107>

2. Music:

I allege that the song "Dance With My Father" infringed upon my gospel music arrangement for my song copy written prior called Heart of Gold

where arrangement, notes, and even style of the song were infringed upon.

Yet, I was shut down in the courts and my song was easily used and trampled over by Luther Vandross's record company machine and team. Please see

<http://mcir.usc.edu/cases/1900-1909/Pages/griffin.html>

3. I allege that my Gospel song "Back To Calvary" was infringed upon by Def Row Record's "All Day" song by Tupac Shakur when my whole beginning arrangement note order and violins were used in the exact same way by this record companies machine.

From The "Find Your Way Back" Collective Work PAu001649799 / 1992-06-19

What do these three pieces of infringement have in common?

1. I allege that they all have experienced infringement where the person or person's involved have taken foundational portions of my creations, added those portions to their creations, and then finalized their productions by claiming that the new product created is original and their own.

2. Each act of alleged infringement had copyright protection at our United States Library of Congress. Pieces of my works and creations have continually been used with complete and blatant disregard of any U.S. Copyright laws and protection as they pertain to my particular works for the past 25 years.

Currently, and likewise, in this current case, a foundational portion of my book called "The Covering" was taken by Peele and his production team and used in their movie "Get Out". The portions taken came directly from my shared experience while in an interracial relationship. In (Chapters 5-7);

(Please see Exhibit C) of my book,

1. In the book, I was described as being the black female heading towards my boyfriends home (at the time) in Newport Washington to meet his family for the first time. In comparison to the movie "Get Out", the character Chris who happened to be an American Black male was heading out to visit his Caucasian girlfriends family also "for the first time".

2. While the two were driving, a deer slammed into the car on the way to the Caucasian families home for dinner and the car spun where there was a need to gain control which was exact to that of my story written in my book.

The deer is mentioned three times in the movie "Get Out" so the significance and symbolism which originated from the Deer is strikingly similar. The Deer's significance is evident in the beginning of the film. We see it when the deer is referred to as scum by the girlfriends father, and in the end when the deer is used by the main character Chris to fight back towards the end of the film. My experience with the deer issue was shared in my book and the significance was being edited when this film's debut began. It was also the beginning of the foundation and theme Peele would use throughout the whole movie, advertising, in all of his movie trailers, etc...

3. The dinner included a special gathering and in my case, the gathering time was Thanksgiving.

Peele's movie gathering included a type of Founders Day auction event.

4. The characters and family dynamic in the story were stolen as the family base included a mother, father, one brother, and one sister, and even a dog as the family pet in my book. Peele was kind enough to allow the main boyfriend character to be black and to own his dog separately.

There was a niece mentioned in my book and his movie included extra characters in the house setting.

The concern is that the similarities within my book were also foundational in

Peele's movie and strikingly almost exact.

5. Another similarity that confirms infringement of my story include the sequential order of my story and events mentioned above. I mention in my book the befriending, and relationship with my ex at the time taking me to his Caucasian families home with the ulterior motive of knowing this relationship was never going to work and secretly using me knowing that he and his family were racist and hated black people.

6. The Transitional Behavior of the Caucasian Partner in the Relationship:

In the book, my ex mentioned the racial table talk where his family referred to blacks as the N word. Yet, he had me eating a holiday meal with his family while keeping it hidden from me as I actually spent the weekend at his families home.

My ex in the book, allowed his mother to cook for me with an initial cordial attitude. Then, later on in our relationship, my ex began making me the enemy and admitted that he also reverted to family tradition by agreeing with his families perception of blacks being considered nothing but the N word. He even shared this with me personally. In comparison to the movie "Get Out", this is the same behavior which was expressed by the female Caucasian girlfriend named Rose.

7. In another instance explained in my book, page 109 mentions the transitional period and turmoil brewing within five months exactly into the interracial relationship. It states "Darron had grown close to me over the past five months. He had become very involved in my world. He met my teens, took them out to dinner, and even bought them pizza many times which was helpful. He even visited my dad and his girlfriend and shared that he wanted to marry me. We didn't get engaged for nothing. We obviously had a love between us that went beyond any racial barriers.

When this situation arose with the school, he had the option of saying "Hey, my girlfriend was put through a lot with my students and she just really cared about the situation." But he didn't stick up for me at all."

Likewise, in the movie "Get Out" the turmoil began after five months into the couple's relationship. This is verified during the scene where the father asks Rose and Chris how long their relationship had been going on and Rose verified that they had been dating for five months exactly. It was this very weekend in the movie, within five months, that their turmoil also began and the relationship would come to an end. Please see the attached link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uVIqOhPqf4w>

8. The Dehumanization Factor: In my book "The Covering", I speak of the dehumanizing experience and deception where the whole family is involved in it. And, at the end of this portion of my story, I speak of the pulling in of the false relationship where my ex and not I, knew it would end in a very deceptive way without any care of the pain it caused me at all. At the end of my book, I questioned why my ex, Darron, the character in my book, even had me at his house knowing that my emotional safety was at stake.

I also spoke about how we are all a part of the human race and should honor that fact.

Viewers opinions: Others noted this same opinion relating to not being human enough for this or that throughout the movie. Because of this other opinion, I know I am not alone in what the movie depicted eat the expense of my copyrighted work.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3TOa1rSD1VI&t=7s> .

Peele's movie travels in that very same pathway and ends as his character fights his way out of that deception yet in a different way.

In my case, and in the book "The Covering", I wasn't human enough to be considered for marriage to my character Darron just as Rose and her family didn't consider the

humanity of the character Chris in the movie.

The point is that the bone structure of the film "Get Out" clearly came from my book "The Covering" which was copy written 18 months before Peele copy wrote his screenplay.

Access:

1. The book was available on amazon.com and createspace Nationally and worldwide. Amazon had "look book" pages where portions of the book could be viewed for review. The book, "The Covering" was also advertised on facebook and on linkedin.com.
2. The book was also shopped to various publishing companies including one particular company called Kensington Publishing. My work was reviewed by a woman named Selena James. (Please see Exhibit D). Whether or not James was the actual route taken where my story was placed into the hands of Peele is an unknown unverifiable matter. However, Selena is friends with a writer and columnist with Huffington Post by the name of Abiola Abrams. (Please see Exhibit E). (Please See Exhibit F). Abrams happens to possibly be the pathway to my books connection to Peele even if unintentionally. Selena could have shared this portion of my book with Abiola while turning me down for publication. This is typical where creatives submit their work to powerhouses that solicit talent as you see here in this video link. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JOUgvex6vp4&t=5s> These solicitors have access to contract or work with the talent they reach out to. Yet, the solicitors many times turn down the creators and authors of creative works claiming that their work didn't fit the direction they were going etc.. Down the road however, pieces of that authors work, even if copy written for protection, illegally gets used in certain film, music productions, etc.. without

the author, musicians, or creator's permission, without contract agreements to use the protected work, or without providing writers credit. This is nothing new. But it is a work culture and behavior that needs to be stopped if the courts are willing.

In my case, and in continuing on with access and possible connections, I feel that Selena could have shared my story with Abrams. Abrams then could have non-chalantly shared my story with her colleagues at the Huffington post casually. One of those connections might have been Jonah Peretti who happens to be Jordan Peele's brother in law. Thus, this portion of my story could have easily and casually got into the hands of Jordan Peele. I personally don't think this started out as intentional. But once the infringement ball started rolling, no one stopped it. This is where I as the Author come in to ask the courts for justice and relief from the infringement practiced by the Defendants.

15. Continuously, Defendants have, to my irreparable damage, been publishing, licensing and selling, and otherwise making commercial exploitation of the infringing works, utilizing the same channels of commerce as myself as Plaintiff, advertising all over the world (one example of which is hereto attached as Plaintiff's Exhibit G) and marketing such infringing works in the same manner as I as Plaintiff plan on marketing my screenplay for my book in the near future to audiences of faith who do have a large following.

16. Defendants' infringing works were published and commercially exploited without license or authorization by myself as Plaintiff.

17. True copies of my original copy written work, and the respective Registrations therefore, are hereto attached as my previous Exhibits respectively.

18. Copies of documentation for Defendants' infringing works are hereto attached as my Exhibits, respectively. On information and belief, these Exhibits provided by myself as Plaintiff, are true copies of works of Defendants published under the authority or license of Defendants, jointly and severally, for which Defendants bear responsibility.

19. As Plaintiff, during my recent State Case with The Honorable Judge Ida Asberry, (RIC1703920), I notified Defendants that Defendants have infringed and are infringing on my copyrights. Judge Asberry Denied the Defendants their Demurrer, Strike motion, and request for Attorney's fees in the case. She then dismissed the case due to improper venue. So, I bring my case to the District Court now for relief.

VERIFIED COMPLAINT

20. Defendants, by their Attorneys, responded to the previous case by letter in the form of email files received, dated May 5, 2017, to myself, Tia Griffin, Plaintiff. The Defendant's Attorney didn't deny infringement throughout the previous case.

21. At all times here relevant Defendants were and still are aware of my, Plaintiff's copyrights to the Book "The Covering". The Defendant's Attorney was given copies of the book sections from Chapters 5-7 that verify the striking exact similarities and others extremely similar to that of my book that were used as proof of infringement examples.

22. Notwithstanding knowledge of my copyrights as Plaintiff and specific notice of infringement, Defendants still continue to infringe upon my copyrights.

23. Defendants did willfully and deliberately copy the sequence of my story from the book "The Covering" and infringed upon my copyrights.

COUNT II: VIOLATIONS OF THE Copyright Act of 1976, Public Law 94-553, 90 Stat 2541, 17 U.S. Code § 101, and 102 Part A and Part a(1) under literary

copyrights, and all subsequent amendments to copyright law and any amendments.

24. As Plaintiff, I repeat and re-allege the allegations contained in numbered paragraphs herein above as though fully set forth here.

25. As Plaintiff, I have extensively used and promoted my book, locally, Nationally, and Worldwide in connection with promoting and selling my book, "The Covering". My book is advertised on linkedin.com in my profile and has come to be recognized as identifying myself as Plaintiff and as the source of its product symbolizing valuable goodwill belonging to me. Such recognition and goodwill arose and accrued prior to the acts complained of herein.

26. As Plaintiff, I have expended significant time and money in promoting and advertising my book as much as is possible and will continue to do so. This infringement causes me to face the burden of explaining the infringement similarities in order to verify my book, "The Covering's authenticity.

VERIFIED COMPLAINT

27. Defendants do not have, nor have ever had, any right or authorization to use any portions of my copy written book "The Covering".

28. Defendants have prominently used and are using characters, the family dynamic, the sequence, the Deer Scene, the dinner table comments written in my book, the dehumanization and safety issues mentioned in my book, and even the luring and deception information from my book which are confusingly similar to my copy written work.

29. Defendants have used and continue to use and sell portions within this movie "Get Out" coming out of my originality and copyrights obtained. Portions of the Defendant's film have a clear connection with my book "The Covering" where some parts are identical and others are strikingly similar to my work as Plaintiff in this case. By showing this movie, the Defendant's have created a false footprint in the literary and film community as if the product using my work was a product they created all along. This was done to my harm and detriment as the original Author and creator of certain scenes Peele used within his film. Defendants used these false footprints in connection with publishing, distributing, advertising and marketing throughout the United States, Worldwide, and even in this district where I reside with my family.

30. Defendants unauthorized use of my book, "The Covering" is likely to cause confusion, or to cause mistake or to deceive prospective acquirers of my own screenplay within the faith oriented film industry into believing that my book and screenplay currently in the works, originated or needs to be licensed by retrieving the Defendants permission. The seriousness of this issue is that I as a woman of faith am now blocked from bringing forth a story, my story of being and living as an American black female enduring life, real situations within my life, caring for my children as sole breadwinner, and expressing faith and belief in a higher power as a solution and outlet for surviving and achieving.

31. Defendants, by improper use of my work as Plaintiff have falsely caused their product, the film "Get Out", to enter into commerce excluding my name which, if listed, would verify my books involvement in the writing portion of the film. This ongoing infringement practiced by the Defendants has thereby diverted current and future income from myself as Plaintiff to Defendants. As Plaintiff, I have been, am currently being, and likely to be damaged by the use by Defendants of the aforesaid false description or representation now and in the future.

32. Defendant acts are in violation of Copyright Act of 1976, Public Law 94-553, 90 Stat 2541, 17 U.S. Code § 101, and 102 Part A and Part a(1) under literary copyrights, and all subsequent amendments to copyright law and any amendments.

33. At all times relevant to this case hereto, Defendants were aware of my copyright as Plaintiff and continue to use the contents of my book illegally and with blatant disregard.

34. Upon information and belief, the Defendants adopt and maintain the idea that it is acceptable to continually infringe upon my copy written work as Plaintiff which is a copyright they know does not fully belong to their production of the film "Get Out".

35. Upon information and belief, all Defendant's acts complained of herein were done and continue to be practiced in a manner with the intent to cause confusion among customers who may want to purchase my book, and to praise themselves and Jordan Peele based on his awards received and accomplishments while overlooking the infringement illegally being practiced. Yet, as Plaintiff, I am still present asking for acknowledgment of this injustice and asking for justice and compensation for the illegal acts continually being practiced by the Defendant's and their Attorneys. The goal of the Defendant's, in my opinion, is to capitalize improperly on the goodwill accruing to myself as Plaintiff.

VERIFIED COMPLAINT

COUNT III: COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT AND UNFAIR COMPETITION

36. As Plaintiff, I repeat and re-allege the allegations contained in numbered paragraphs herein above as though fully set forth here.

37. Defendants have, in addition to the acts as alleged above, substantially copied and plagiarized entire scenes, characters, themes, and sequence portions from my book, with the specific intent to create a belief that they created an amazing work originated "from the mind of Jordan Peele" which is a false assessment based on the facts provided.

38. Defendants' acts as heretofore alleged constitute infringement of myself, Plaintiff's Copyrights and unfair competition to the irreparable damage of Plaintiff.

39. Defendants' acts, as alleged herein and above, have been willful and deliberate intending to harm and damage myself as Plaintiff, my future book sales, my future faith based screenplay, my copyright's validity, and future finances based on the original work I created utilizing my hard work, time, efforts, and writing experience.

WHEREFORE PLAINTIFF DEMANDS JUDGMENT AS FOLLOWS:

(1) Enjoining Defendants, jointly and severally, and any of their agents, servants or any in active concert or participation with any of them, temporarily during the pendency of this action and thereafter permanently from infringing Plaintiff's copyrights in any manner, and from publishing, licensing, selling, distributing or marketing or otherwise disposing of any copies of Defendants' works within the movie "Get Out"; and from infringing in any manner Plaintiff, Tia Griffin's, Copyright;

VERIFIED COMPLAINT

(2) Ordering the Defendants, jointly and severally, to pay myself, Tia Griffin, Plaintiff such damages as I have sustained in consequence of Defendants' acts of infringement of my copyrights, and unfair competition and to account for:

(a) all gains, profits and advantages derived by Defendants and each of them by said practices and unfair competition; and

(b) all gains, profits and advantages derived by Defendants and each of them by infringement of my copyrights or such damages as to the Court shall appear proper within the provisions of the Copyright Act of 1976, but not less than the statutory minimums therein provided; and

(c) all gains, profits and advantages derived by Defendants and each of them by infringement of my copyright work or such damages as to the Court shall appear proper within the provisions of the Copyright Act of 1976,

(3) Trebling Plaintiff's damages of 7 million dollars as awarding statutory damages or at the highest level allowed, literary writers credit, current and future royalties in every aspect of the films profits throughout the life of the film and it's sales ability. And, for a percentage of any rewrites where the deer scene and other scenes mentioned are included, for a percentage of the Production bonus upon commencement of principal photography where the Deer scene and other scenes mentioned in my book are included, for residuals (to receive credit on produced Guild covered material, and compensation if the material is reused) for a combination of DVD sales, TV airings, foreign, etc., for a percentage if the movie gets made into a sequel, depending upon receiving my writing credit (shared or sole credit, and that the studios pay a percentage to myself, based upon my writing fees, into a WGA pension program if possible where if achieved, 7 qualifying years, upon retirement I will receive a monthly payment based upon my total lifetime earnings.

(4) Ordering Defendants to deliver up to be impounded during the pendency of this action all copies of said works entitled "Get Out" in the possession or control of Defendants or either of them or any of their employees, agents, servants, distributors or licensees and to deliver up for destruction all copies of any infringing

work, as well as all forms of media, documentation
and any means for making such infringing copies;

(5) Awarding myself as Plaintiff the costs of this action
and reasonable Pro Se' fees which included time, gas money, photocopies,
mailing fees, and hours of research against Defendants;

(6) For such other and further relief as is just.

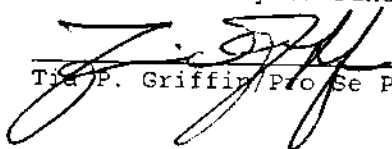
VERIFIED COMPLAINT

PLAINTIFF'S VERIFICATION:

I, Tia Griffin, am the Plaintiff in this case. I have read and understand the matters alleged in my complaint as Plaintiff; and

the facts and statements set forth in said Complaint are, to the best of my knowledge, true; and all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true without penalty or perjury.

Verified and Dated the 12th day of June in the year 2017.


Tia P. Griffin, Pro Se Plaintiff

Tia P. Griffin
In Care of D. Griffin
2442 Iowa Avenue Apt. P14
Riverside, CA. 92507
(559)721-8712

VERIFIED COMPLAINT

INDEX TO PLAINTIFF' EXHIBITS HERETO ATTACHED

Plaintiff's Exhibit by Letter	Description
A	Tia Griffin's Copyright Information Re: 'The Covering"
B	Jordan Peele's Copyright Information
C	The Covering Chapters 5-7
D	Selena James Email Conversations dated March 30, 1988; TX2-264-701
E	Selena James and Abiola Abrams Soliciting Writers on Youtube
F	Abiola Abram's Network Connection with The Huffington Post
G	Photos of Advertising for the movie "Get Out"

Exhibit ~~E~~ A

Type of Work: Text

Registration Number / Date: TXu001922667 / 2014-05-11

Application Title: The Covering.

Title: The Covering.

Description: Electronic file (eService)

Copyright Claimant: Tia Patrice Griffin, 1967- . Address: 723 E Decatur Ave, Spokane, WA, United States.

Date of Creation: 2014

Authorship on Application: Tiselle Bisette, pseud. of Tia Patrice Griffin, 1967- ; Domicile: United States; Citizenship: United States. Authorship: text.

Rights and Permissions: Tia Griffin, CV, 723 E Decatur Ave, Spokane, WA, 99208, United States, (509) 607-8549, (509) 607-8549, insource_7@hotmail.com

Names: Griffin, Tia Patrice, 1967-

Bisette, Tiselle, pseud., 1967-

Exhibit ~~A~~ B

Type of Work: Dramatic Work and Music; or Choreography

Registration Number / Date: PAu003809078 / 2015-11-02

Application Title: Get Out.

Title: Get Out.

Description: Electronic file (eService)

Copyright Claimant: Sugarbear, LLC, Transfer: By written contract. Address: 7164
Melrose Ave. 2nd Floor, Los Angeles, CA, 90046.

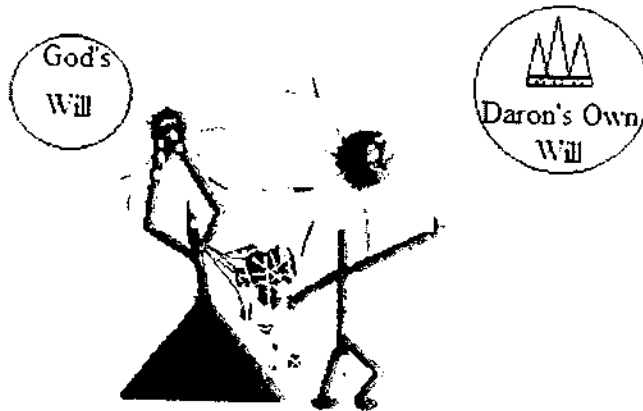
Date of Creation: 2015

Alternative Title on Application: Get Out of the House

Authorship on Application: Jordan Peele, 1979- ; Citizenship: United States. Authorship:
Screen Play.

Names: Peele, Jordan, 1979-
Sugarbear, LLC

Chapter 5



My Heartbreak

Wouldn't it be wonderful if the men we dated told us "up front" exactly what they wanted in a relationship? I mean, there are a lot of men out there that want our bodies "up front" in one way or another during our dating moments before marriage. Yet, we wait six months or more before we learn what their original "up front"

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goals and motives are in building relationships with us. We always say "if we only knew back then what we know now, we wouldn't have entered into a relationship with that person." That's how it was with Darron and I. Today, I can easily look back and see what the problems were in our past relationship. But back then, I simply had no clue as to what I was getting into. Darron had a lot of issues. But, I also had my own as well. Taking care of four teens, working night shift, going to college full time, and building a new relationship was way too much for one person to accomplish all at once. I worked so hard during the week and cared for others but couldn't even keep my own house clean. My weekends were also busy because that was when Darron would travel 3 hours to visit me. I hadn't seen a man take that type of initiative to spend time with me like that in years. I truly believed he was sincere. But that was early on in our relationship. Now that I have a full picture of my experience, I clearly see the warning signs that I ignored. I already mentioned that we met online. I also mentioned that he lived in another city. But there

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were more challenges that added to our relationship that would prove to be difficult for us down the road.

Our first date was a dinner date and was a lot of fun. He was very kind, attentive, and we had a lot to talk about. On our second date that same weekend, Darron took a picture of us together to show his students. He asked me to wear this little mascot bracelet for his school and he gave me one of his ID faculty photos as well. He told me I could use it as a key chain to remember him by while we were apart. I thought it was a little soon for all of that. But I didn't think it would cause any harm initially. It did make me feel like he was serious about getting to know me so I was intrigued by the small gesture. Later on into our relationship, I found that these early pictures and this rushing into things was his m.o. to his relationships. For some reason, he was in a hurry to prove to his students and his family that he had someone special in his life but at the time, I didn't know why.

My next warning sign came when he sent me some photos of he and his students during one of their prom nights. One picture was

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of he and his female students. And the other picture was of him and the boys he taught. My first impression was "Wow. This teacher really has a good relationship with his students". But what I didn't understand was why he was the only faculty in the photos with them. One of his female students had a slit in her dress that was so high that it almost displayed her underwear. And she was standing right next to Darron halfway facing him in the photo. I thought that was a little creepy on the part of the person taking the photos. In the other picture, the boys were all standing dressed up in a huddle and Darron was laying down on the ground in front of them on his side. Darron also wore a tux which made it look as if he himself were going to the prom. His dressing up for the prom was also very unusual. I know this was a small school District. But, when I was back in school, I don't remember ever hanging out with my teachers like that. The smaller school size was really no excuse for what I saw in those pics. There was also one other concern that made me feel a bit queasy. Darron was the one and only sports coach for a particular sport at the school. He taught

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the students and was very good at coaching. The school gave him all rights to travel with the students to different cities for competition. Some of those events were overnight events. And once again, he was the only teacher present. There was no dual accountability. That reality was not particularly his fault. But, it did leave the doors open for questions if any unusual incidences arose. In this one particular photo that had me concerned, one of the boys sat quietly by himself as Darron turned to look at him. The picture looked as if the boy was uncomfortable with something pertaining to Darron. I asked Darron where his fellow faculty members were in these pics. But he just said that they let him take the reigns in these areas with the students. That glimpse of queeziness started to remain throughout our relationship. Especially, as it pertained to his spending so much time alone with his students. When it wouldn't go away, I decided to take it to the Lord in prayer. I needed revelation as to what the Lord was trying to show me, if anything at all.

One month into our relationship, Darron invited me and my

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teens to spend Thanksgiving with he and his family. My teens didn't want to go and really didn't seem to want me around. They wanted me to cook and get everything nice and wonderful for the holiday. But, because they knew I had spent so many years alone, they encouraged me to go ahead and get to know this new man in my life. They were curious about where things would lead down the road between Darron and I and they wanted me to be happy. I was hesitant, but went ahead and spent the holiday with his family. On the way to Darron's parents house, a crazy deer came crashing into the car causing Darron and I to do a full 360 spin on the small highway. I was so terrified, that my stomach just tied up in knots. Darron's truck was banged up on the front side. Yet, during the spin, he was completely calm. He controlled this car so well during that moment that he prevented the two of us from flipping over the side to our deaths. I knew I had some questions about this man. After all, we had only been dating a month. But I could see that he wanted to be a good quality man before me. His sincerity in trying, caused me to loosen up my reigns and release

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a little bit of trust in him early on.

At dinner, I met his mom, his dad, his sister, his niece, and their precious little dog. By all appearances, they were a sweet family. His sister was an overachieving RN that lived out of State, and his niece was very intelligent. His father was very kind. And his mother was blessed with the Midas touch when it came to cooking. That woman could cook anything and make it taste amazing.

Pretty soon, all of our weekend moments were spent together. We didn't have a neutral place so we ended up spending almost every weekend at his parents home. They were very nice but we had to include his mom in most of our free time together. After all, it was their house.

“What I Know Now” Quick Advice Lesson: When you are entering into a new relationship, you should never agree to meet the other persons parents until you are ready. It is only fair that you have time to get to know the man you are dating first. Then as you build up strength in your relationship, you will be able to

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withstand judgment on your character. Let's face it, that's what families do when they first meet you...they judge your character. In my case, my ex knew that his mother would be judging me and he valued her opinion greatly. But when you don't know anything about his parents, or how their family dynamic works, you will be at a disadvantage. If a man is getting to know you, and his mother is the matriarch of the family and is judging you by first appearances, you'll never win. First appearances don't give enough time to get a full picture of who you are. And, if his mother criticizes who you are early on, he will be looking for pieces of the same picture she paints of you all throughout the lifespan of your relationship. You will unknowingly be walking on eggshells instead of enjoying getting to know the man you adore. I'll never forget the time I had to drive Darron's parents car from Spokane to Newport Washington. Darron was driving his brand new car from the dealership and needed me to drive his parents car behind him. As we drove and it began to snow, I had difficulty seeing the road. I was pre-diabetic and didn't do well

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with night vision. Darron knew this but was excited about speeding in his new car. He drove so fast that I almost got lost trying to keep up with him. While I was concerned about getting into a car accident with his parents car, Darron was telling his mom to watch me because it was his first time seeing me upset. It was like being in a relationship with both he and his mom and I didn't like it. They didn't get my concerns about avoiding a car wreck and were more concerned about observing my response. At dinner, the two scanned me as if they were waiting for me to explode into little pieces which wasn't going to happen. I admit that I was a little upset. But that was for Darron to work out with me. After all, I was in a relationship with him and we were still learning about each other. But when he invited his mom into a small issue involving the two of us, I slowly began to realize that I was a third party in their unbreakable two party relationship.

Darron's mother had a certain quarky wit about her. She had a nice side, a sarcastic side, and a cruel side to her all in one. Some of the things she said were hilarious. But some of her other

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comments were cold and left me questioning whether she was actually joking about certain things or not. We were just shooting the breeze one day when his mother shared a story about the death of someone she use to work with. She didn't like this co-worker of hers and was glad she was gone. While we were all sitting at the table talking, she shared of how she went to the funeral and stomped on her previous co-worker's grave just to make sure she was dead. I couldn't explain it. But, there was just something really really cold about her comments. During that same conversation, she began sharing how life was for her growing up. Her relatives seemed very impressive. She then mentioned that one of her male relatives suffered from depression and that it ran in their family. As the story goes, this relative was in love and happily engaged to a single parent. But when his family got wind of his engagement, they made him break things off with the woman. Back then, this woman's status as a single parent wasn't acceptable to their family. This relative apparently listened to his families wishes and ended up a hermit living depressed and alone

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until he died. It was a very sad story that made me wonder whether or not his mother was trying to tell me something early on since I was also a single parent. In another story, Darron's mom then spoke of how another relative was a professor/narcissist who started out with a wife and a girlfriend. But, somewhere down the line, he had a nervous breakdown because his conscious caught up with him. He just couldn't manage both relationships. I remember appreciating her sharing these stories about her relatives. But I never associated it with relevance between Darron and myself. At times, it seemed as if she was trying to steer Darron's life in a very controlling way by playing with his psyche. She did this by paralleling his life's outcome to that of the relatives mentioned in her stories. When she told Darron that he was a reincarnation of one of her female relatives, I really got unnerved with her. No adult son needs to be told that he was a woman secretly trapped in a man's body. It was annoying. And to make matters worse, Darren never stood up for himself to refute his mother's sometimes off the wall comments.

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He would just sit quietly until another conversation began. I definitely didn't like what I was seeing. But, it was still early in our relationship. I didn't want to do any wave making until I was sure I had a place in his life to do so.

By December of that same year, Darron had asked me to spend a romantic holiday weekend with him in a beautiful tiny city called Leavenworth. I had never been there before. But, they had beautiful shops and a tree lighting ceremony that I was excited to see. Darron made sure all of that happened. And we had a wonderful time. But, my body was involved and we were sleeping together every chance we could get after that. I was living in sin. And soon, my soul became intertwined with his. I remember waking up one morning, and he was calling me his girlfriend. It was way too soon. But, I accepted the new title anyways. I knew I liked him very much. I also knew that we needed more time to get to know each other. I just didn't want to live outside of God's will with him. He eventually picked up on that because I found him having a ring designed with both of our birthstones on it just

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for me. It was the sweetest thing any man had ever done. And I just fell in love with that man after that. Looking back now, I can see that we were both going through the motions way too soon. We were still getting to know each other, and we were not ready for marriage. Everything we did was temporary and we were really not heading for anything long lasting. Now, the Bible says that "*we should guard our hearts with all diligence*". But I had completely let my guard down. Being tired was no excuse. Relationships are very much like driving a car. You have to stay alert. I bypassed more warning signs that I should have paid more attention to. First of all, there were moments where I saw glimpses of different personalities within this precious man. I saw this teacher/historian/adult man that was absolutely intelligent and wonderful. There wasn't anything he didn't know about history and his knowledge and conversations were always intriguing. I absolutely loved that and began to call him "my sweet man". We also had music and composing in common and loved to write and produce songs. I had always prayed for a man like that. And here

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he was right in front of me. But there were other times when I saw this immature boy that seemed to be around sixteen or seventeen years old. This side of his personality was very sarcastic, rude at times, and would cause him to say things that were completely juvenile. I recall the time when I was washing my hands before dinner and had accidentally left my favorite ring on his bathroom counter. We were five months into our dating relationship and he had already proposed and had given me two rings. Since the ring that I left in his bathroom was my favorite, I never even thought twice about the idea that I could retrieve it from Darron on another day. Shortly after I got home from being at his place, he called me very upset. It was this strange tone that I noticed that was so different than any other time. "You purposely left that ring at my house because you wanted to make sure other people knew you were at there" he stated sharply. I didn't even realize that I left my ring. But his tone and attitude brought me to tears because it wasn't true. I was comfortable with him and had no ulterior motives behind anything pertaining to us at that point.

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After all, we were engaged so why would anything left at his place cause such a stir? When he saw that he upset me, he apologized and assured me that he would never do anything to hurt me etc.... It was as if he came out of his immature self at that moment and became this adult once again. I accepted his apology but it seemed like he was sabotaging our relationship for some reason. I couldn't quite put my finger on it, but I knew something was definitely not right in our situation.

Some other incidences that arose had to do with Darrons lack of boundaries with his students. In one instance, I ended up being confronted by one of his female students at a basketball game he was scoring. Darron's high school classroom had all of these photos of his former students. So, when he added my photo for his students to see, it naturally caused them to ask questions about who I was. My thoughts were more in line of (how about we not put my pic up on the wall until you and I know where we are going in this relationship). But he thought question and answer time about the two of us was fun. He definitely wanted to

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incorporate his personal choices with his students approval. When he began to tell me that his students wanted to meet me and had questions, I was a little stand offish. I wanted to meet his students. I just didn't know if it was alright with their parents. I was a third party and had teens myself. I just felt like there needed to be some sort of boundary clearance with his employer before I started chatting personally about myself with his students. And what if we didn't last? What would his explanation be? Should every new woman in Darron's life be on display for his students? Or should his personal life be kept separate from them for the time being? Darron felt like everything was fine. And because of this nonchalance, one of his male and female students sat next to me in the bleachers and started questioning me. The boy didn't say anything. He just stared at me as if he and the girl were protecting their teacher. But the girl next to him came up and started asking me to tell her a little bit about myself. I shared my name and said where I was from. But, I was the adult and she was a young girl. I didn't feel that I needed to elaborate. When she

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continued to ask questions, I got really uncomfortable. I had hoped Darron would step in and say "uh, that's enough". But, he acted like he was one of the student gang instead of acting like a teacher with boundaries. I finally had to say that I didn't feel comfortable giving out anymore information. After that, the girl and the boy left. Call it discernment, but I knew that contact with these two students was not over. At 9:30 pm, at his home, his cell phone rang and Darron claimed that the call was from his female student that approached me earlier at the game. But, it also could have been another woman or former adult female or male student of his. Bottom line is that I truly never knew. Darron told me that the parents had signed a contract with him allowing the students to call him after hours on his cell if it was school related. I was really uncomfortable with that at this point because if it was the girl I met at the game, she had no business calling. She was fifteen to his 50 and the conversation had nothing to do with school. I couldn't tell him what to do. But I felt like the school should have created some type of traceable communication so

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that neither he nor his students would cross boundary lines in their teacher to student communication. It didn't seem healthy and I let him know how I felt. He shared that he would report her calling to the school. And that was the end of it, so I thought. Pretty soon, every time I was with him his cell phone was lit up! He told me that the calls were from his former students who were calling to congratulate him on our engagement. But when the calls got to be so frequent, I began wondering what was really going on. It was as if he were the big man on campus and he was Mr. popular all over again. While he was enjoying the attention, I was mostly thinking about the fact that those were his former students and not his 1980's former classmates or adult basketball buddies from his high school years. I was curious to know whether or not he was noticing the difference. There was one point where he got a call from a former male student. When I asked him who was calling, he told me that the guy was gay and wanted him to come to his dorm to meet with him about something. I remember asking why the guy was reaching

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backwards for the support of his former high school teacher instead of reaching forward towards college counselors or advisers to meet his emotional needs in his process. But he shared that he liked being there for his students. After this, things just escalated for the worse. While I was in the middle of planning a wedding, he had already sabotaged our relationship by just refusing to set boundaries. The issue wasn't just about his students calling him all hours of the night. It was also about the fact that he gave these students his number and access to reach him at any time. One night while we were watching tv, he read a text aloud that stated "why do we do this to each other?" He claimed that it was a movie trivia game he played with his students. But that's when his stories stopped adding up. If he were truly texting back and forth with his students so late at night, then movie trivia was verification that the communication with them went way beyond school related issues. If he was texting another woman on the side right in front of me, he was being disrespectful to our engagement and his using his students as a cover up was a really risky

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decision. By outer appearances, his open door 24/7 communication seems like a nice gesture from a nice teacher. But without some sort of checks and balances, his situation could have been dangerous. He was a lonely single man whose students both male and female had access to him. One phone call could one day become a booty call while no one was ever looking. When I brought this to his attention, he seemed uncomfortable. Even his mom started acting differently and stated "Women are like golf balls. They can always be replaced." When I asked him what she meant by that, he blew it off claiming she was being sarcastic about nothing. But since she made statements like these in my presence, it was clear that she wanted me to hear them. I started to sense that (he and his mother) were pushing me out of "our" relationship already. Three months into our relationship, Darron had shared that there was some abuse issues at the hands of his father towards the family when he was younger. I saw his baby pictures and noted that he was such a precious little boy. I could see that there was some sadness in his face in the photos

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which explained the circumstances he grew up in. There was one picture where he was sitting by himself in this field on this rock. He couldn't have been more than three or four years old. Yet he looked so sad and overwhelmed. He was simply the cutest little thing. But then, there was also the abuse that made up who he was now as an adult. And he was clearly not dealing with things. Our whirlwind of love began to unravel like a puzzle. And when I tried to put the pieces together, nothing fit. Darron wasn't making good choices and I could clearly see that. I loved him very much and wanted to help him as much as I could. But he had kept so much hidden for so many years that he was used to keeping it inside. Sharing things with me was a start to his healing. But it was also a threat to his mom. And she did not like being exposed. She had a tight grip on him and she was going to keep it that way. At one point, she just approached me and looked me right in the face saying "Do you want my clothes, my scarf, or my house? What do you want from me?" she asked in frustration. I really tried to stay calm when this occurred. But I didn't know what was

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wrong in that moment. I never asked for anything and couldn't understand what her issue was. What I do know is that it was never a good idea for me to spend time with Darron's family like that. She didn't know me and I didn't know her. Because she was feeling this way, Darron and I really needed to slow down. But instead, we just kept going in the midst of obvious turmoil that kept brewing. The fact that I was such a "yes" person to everything Darron had suggested was the part in our relationship that was completely my fault. It wasn't idol worship. But it became a kind of disregard for what God wanted at the time. We were heading for marriage by July of that year and I didn't want to let go of my dream of spending the rest of my life with Darron. The Lord was trying to warn me, but I didn't want to hear it. Leaving God out, would eventually lead to unnecessary pain that I brought upon myself.

Adult Children and Abuse

Time with Darron became difficult because now, both he and I were spending every weekend with the very parents that had

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abused him. He needed to deal with his childhood issues that were affecting him as an adult. Jumping into marriage wasn't going to make everything alright. He needed Christ front and center in his life. He also needed counseling and time to process all that he had experienced. He needed to learn how to set boundaries that he could stick with on a consistent basis pertaining to his mom, his students, and everything around him. He was a very good man.

But, like me, he had way too much on his plate.

His situation was very similar to that of one of my neighbors. She was a young girl that had befriended my daughter. She was always telling my daughter these horror stories about her father and how he was constantly raping her while her mother sat back and watched. It was truly a sick situation. I reported the comments to the local police and to the school counselor. I then suggested that the girl get some help in her situation. But when help arrived, the girl protected her abusive father and denied everything that she had been sharing. The girl stayed in the home as if nothing was wrong. Yet, she kept telling my daughter

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ongoing stories that verified the opposite. My daughter finally told her that she couldn't carry the weight of the stories being shared but would be praying for her. This young girl had gotten use to identifying with the ongoing rape she experienced at the hands of her own father. She was so use to it that she protected and defended it even when she had a way out. The same went for Darron. He wanted that sense of family and did everything he could to keep it. He wanted me but he also wanted to please his mother. He was always constantly reverting back to childhood memories that were never resolved.

I heard a famous hip-hop artist share her own experience with abuse. She apparently reached out to teens to encourage them to report abuse. When her mother found out, she disappointingly said "I thought this was going to be our little secret". It has taken me a couple of years to understand this. But, I came to realize that there are families out there that want to keep these little secrets hidden and encased in a shell. But, that idea continues to enslave the now adult children who need to be set free from the

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sometimes horrific abuse. They need an outlet to talk about it and to recognize that it was wrong. They also need to know that the abuse wasn't their fault, and that it is no longer their responsibility to carry that stone of remembrance inside them. Darron needed to have some sort of positive relationship with his mom if not his father. But what he didn't realize was that his mom's decisions and opinions were no healthier than they were when he was a child suffering in the middle of abuse that she ignored. Even as an adult, his mother backed up his boundary less life even if it was detrimental to his career and reputation. In essence, she was still justifying the very things that hurt Darron. Only, he couldn't see it. I saw Darron making some really great strides towards a more healthy pathway and sensed that he wanted to go forward. But his relationship with his mom kept pulling him back into old ways. As he had right or wrong choices before him, he kept choosing wrong which allowed trouble to continue brewing in both of our lives. The Bible says,

"See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse-the

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blessing if you obey the commands of the Lord your God that I am giving you today; the curse if you disobey the commands of the Lord your God and turn from the way that I command you today by following other gods, which you have not known.”

Deuteronomy 11:26-28

The message here may have appeared to mainly be about what Darron was doing wrong. But, I was in covenant with him by way of our engagement. I was following behind him at the time and was not following nor listening to Jesus. This position that I had put myself in left me uncovered and away from that umbrella of protection that the Lord had offered me as His child. Therefore, whatever was happening with Darron, was happening to me. I was also in line for whatever was coming next whether it be good or bad because of that covenant engagement.

The Turmoil Continued

Another issue that we had in the process of planning our wedding was Darron's choice for best man. He said he didn't have any adult friends and the only best friend he had was one of his

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former male students. When he wanted this former student to be his best man, I had to put my foot down. He met this now adult former student when he was only 14 years old. Apparently, he taught his older sister before she passed away. According to Darron, she was rushing away from the school for some reason and got into a fatal car accident. When her little brother got into high school, Darron took him under his wings and built a personal friendship with him. Darron said the boy joined the military after graduation. But whenever he returned to his hometown, instead of renting or getting a hotel, Darron claimed his former student stayed with him. Darron shared that when this former student graduated from the military in Hawaii, Darron, against military policy, stayed in his barracks with him instead of staying in a nearby hotel. When I could see that their friendship had nothing but blurred lines all around, I expressed how I felt about it. Darron tried to tell me that their friendship just happened. But, I had to remind him that this was another teacher to student boundary issue. Their friendship began when the boy was only

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fourteen which was not ok. A fourteen year old boy doesn't know how to build a friendship with a 50 year old man. But a 50 year old man knows how to orchestrate one with a fourteen year old boy. It becomes manipulation because of the age and knowledge imbalance. When Darron's mom stepped in to give her opinion, she stressed that the boy was 18 when he stayed with Darron as if it was somehow acceptable. I then made it clear to both Darron and his mother that building personal friendships with minors he was teaching is called "grooming". It's not healthy and it crosses boundaries to what teachers are suppose to be involved in with their students. I never signed on to be anyone's moral compass during our relationship. I was just trying to get the two to rub their eyes a little so that they could see in the midst of their own blindness. Unfortunately, Darron thought my comments were mean. He then refused to hear me out. And before I knew it, the issue worsened. The male student that met me at the basketball game prior, crossed the boundaries Darron refused to set, and got on my facebook wall. I blocked him once. But he somehow found

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a way to enter in on my wall again through the school secretary who had just joined my facebook friends list. She knew about the blurred lines with the students. Yet, she just looked the other way. The whole school dynamic was messed up because no one seemed to be listening. Eventually, this male student started making comments about how he didn't like Darron's friendship building with he and his fellow minor students at the school. And, he made that clear on my facebook wall before my family and friends. I didn't like having to confront this student on my own. But Darron refused to do anything about it. This personal friendship building had been taking place undetected for about five years between Darron and his students. His students had gotten use to boundary crossing with Darron to the point of their creating this tight fraternity/sorority type group that Darron was head of. After graduation, they became adults that could make their own decisions. Because of that, no one ever questioned any boundary issues and Darron could do what he pleased with his now adult students. But this particular boy didn't want to be a part

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of that groomed society. I'm not even sure that Darron even realized the enormity of the situation he had created. I felt sorry for the young man because choosing to be outside of a group that his teacher was head of, would make him an outcast. It's hard enough being a high school student dealing with small town values, poverty, peer pressure, grades, and so on. But then having this teacher/student group stand against you creates a whole new ball of wax that no student really wants to have to endure. I told this student that if he felt uncomfortable about anything, he needed to report it to the school authorities. I then blocked him from my page and confronted Darron myself. Instead of Darron reaching out for me, he went into defense mode and built up a shell against me. He started being sarcastic, telling me I should go on Oprah, and continued making hurtful comments to me. "Oprah? No he didn't!" I remember thinking. He didn't just put up a wall against me. He also created a racial barrier between the two of us. This ugly, evil, cancerous spirit of racial hatred that had never been an issue between us before, divided us like an enemy in

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battle. It surrounded our relationship like a blanket and I couldn't shake it off. As I prayed, I could feel the accusations being spoken into Darron's ears against me. "I was black, I couldn't be trusted, I was angry, I was evil, I was a self righteous judgmental Christian, and I wanted to take from Darron by ruining his teaching career". None of those accusations from the enemy were true. Yet, I couldn't stop the train from derailing our relationship. Within days, Darron detached himself from me and started a new relationship with someone else. He stopped talking to me and whenever he did talk, he commented about about how he was traveling here and there with someone else but wasn't telling me who it was. When I wanted to discuss the issues at hand, he just kept dodging me. He simply said goodbye and it was just that easy for him. He was the one that created this problem. Yet, somehow, he found a way to blame me as a result.

We had all of these layers and barriers between us and he pushed me aside instead of trying to work things out. When I sought advice on what to do, a friend told me that I could not

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hesitate on this issue. They suggested that I anonymously call the State and report that the school itself needed some type of monitoring for the safety of both the students and it's faculty. Unfortunately, when I tried to do this, I got a rude awakening. I found that there is no such thing as "anonymous reporting". Once I started the ball rolling, it was all on me. I really loved Darron more than I had ever loved any man. But, I didn't want to be the one to allow this boys voice to be shut out because of that love. I didn't want to be the parent that ignored obvious boundary issues between an adult and a student that could one day lead to manipulation or abuse. So, I was forced to give my name, and share my concerns. I was hoping that the situation would lead to safety and change. But, while on the line, I heard a series of phone clicks. And eventually, the call was transferred from Olympia to ESD supervisors. Then the call went from the ESD offices to Darron's supervisor at the high school he taught at. It was horrible. They never told me who I was being transferred to. And before I knew it, that's who I ended up talking to. I had

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hoped that the Principal would assure me that he would start working to create systems to set safe boundaries for the good of everyone. Unfortunately, his only concern was whether or not I was planning to sue the District. The lack of concern for the students verified the atmosphere and the work culture that had been created. It wasn't my job to be the lone ranger to tell the Principal that. He must have already known. It should have actually come from the educational advocates at our State Capitol. But when they didn't want to deal with it, they pushed me into the limelight on the issue. When Darron heard about it, he was furious. He told me that everything was fine until I came into the picture. He shared that he and the principal were talking and were wondering why I was so mad at him. But, I wasn't mad at him at all. I didn't even have verification that he was in a new relationship at the time. This issue was about the safety of the kids. But somehow it turned to be all about me, the stereotypical angry black woman. That was the turning point for the two of us forever.

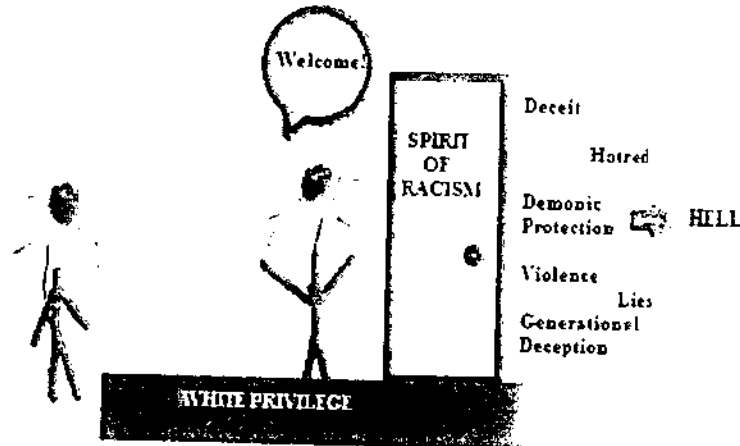
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Darron had grown close to me over the past five months. He had become very involved in my world. He met my teens, took them out to dinner, and even bought them pizza many times which was helpful. He even visited my dad and his girlfriend and shared that he wanted to marry me. We didn't get engaged for nothing. We obviously had a love between us that went beyond any racial barriers. When this situation arose with the school, he had the option of saying "Hey, my girlfriend was put through a lot with my students and she just really cared about the situation." But he didn't stick up for me at all.

Why? Because like certain credit cards, his white male

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membership had it's privileges.



It awarded him access to cover up his wrong doing. And it justified his scenario that I was just some jealous woman who was upset because he found a seemingly better woman who happened to be white. This was a perfect story. Who wouldn't believe that? This open door was just another form of temptation the enemy of our soul uses to reel a person into his kingdom. Darron just couldn't see it. The only reason why Caucasians who are true believers see it is because they wear spiritual glasses. They use discernment and refuse to make a date with that spirit because

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they are wise and know where that red carpet leads. They care way too much about humanity and salvation. They know that God created all of us and refuse to get sucked into the superior/inferior complex for personal gain. But not Darron. He took a step on that red carpet and it felt good to him. It was a way out of the mess and no one would ever question him. Because after all, some of his colleagues also went down that same pathway themselves. With systems and networking elite backing them, they were almost untouchable and the offer was irresistible. Once Darron steered his colleagues, family, and new girlfriend in that direction, the transaction was sealed and his cover wasn't blown. I spoke out about this issue because it was put in my lap. I was an advocate for kids in education long before Darron and I ever met. I didn't want to be responsible for doing nothing relating to children or youth regardless of where Darron stood. That was when Darron finally said goodbye. He didn't want to hear about what occurred and didn't want to take responsibility for anything either. He didn't have to.

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When he wasn't willing to meet me half way or budge, I was completely heartbroken. It was a week before my birthday and he was gone. I may not have been the woman tapping on the window like the other girl. But after he left me, I missed him so very much. He might have been conditional about the marriage, but I was no flaky Jake. I was committed to working things out with him. But only if he were willing to work with me as well. But he wasn't willing.

I soon found myself at the same crossroads that I experienced in my relationship with Al. And once again, I experienced another man that thought it was easier to find someone else rather than do the work needed to make changes that would benefit both of us. Not having Darron around was like losing a piece of my soul. I had no compass for love and I was lost. I prayed for God to intervene and make changes. But the changes didn't come. I emailed Darron like a crazy woman hoping he might respond. But nothing happened. I was so broken that I went to see a Christian counselor at a local church. She was such a help and was the first

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person to suggest that he was probably already in another relationship. I couldn't see that because my love for him was so strong. But he obviously did not feel the same way. He was a man that was use to turning love off and on like a light switch. The abuse he experienced taught him that. He stayed gone for nine long months. Then suddenly, in early November, he reached out to me again. He first began reaching out to me by emails. Then later on, he began to contact me by phone. Regardless of the avenues he took, he was missing me. His emotions were obviously conflicted and twisted since there was such an unresolved divide between us. Yet, he didn't seem to care. I tried to discuss~~the~~ the issues we still faced. But, he shrugged them off by saying he was seeing a counselor. I truly believed that he was sincere, but time would prove that I was wrong. Darron didn't come back to repair "us". He came back to destroy "me". And he planned to do this in a deceptive, cruel way. He already had another relationship secretly growing on the side and planned to use it as fuel against me. I was no longer his love interest. Instead,

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he determined in his heart that I was nothing more than an insignificant black woman that he would use then never speak to again . He carried his new girlfriend on his cell phone and deep hatred towards me in his heart. His misguided anger was like a seed that he swallowed and digested until it reached the pit of his stomach. During the ten months that he was away, it was planted until it blossomed into a spirit of racism. He felt very justified in his new way of thinking and planned to take all of his anger out on me. He met me in December and spent the whole weekend with me. He took me to dinner, bought me jewelry, and then began to cry like a baby. He looked at me with these cloudy blue eyes and told me that there was no one else he loved except me. As he sniffled, he told me that he kept hearing these conflicting voices in his head that wouldn't stop speaking to him. He was weeping so hard that I finally said, "hey, I know we are in a messed up place right now. And this is not the ideal Christ-like situation to mention God. But we need to pray. Would you like to ask Christ to come live in your heart" I asked. He then said "yes"

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and we began to pray him into the Kingdom. He said he wanted to work things out but was struggling with depression and was trying to balance out his new medication. He made love to me for three days and made me feel that there was hope for both of us in restoring our engagement in the near future. Near future?

RED MEANS STOP RIGHT HERE!



I am not sharing this story so that anyone can sit in judgment saying "well she should have known better." The reality is that like me, there are a bunch of Christian women out there who might *know* better. Yet, in situations like these, they sometimes don't *do* better. Anytime a former fiance or boyfriend wants to see you after ten months, or after any type of distance like Darron and I experienced, you can't let them just walk back into your life and pick up where they left off. You just can't! You have to make them start over. You start over too. You should never do this alone like I did. You should always take a second person with you when you meet with your ex again for that first reunion. My issue is that in the church, everyone is running around doing missions and this and that. But dating renewal is missionary work in itself. Single people are walking around their local cities all alone. They don't

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have relationship support and need assistance. We don't need people holding our hands. But having support, real support from a husband and wife team enforces accountability. How neat would it be to have a faith filled, married, stern man step up in a surprising way, put his arm around one of our exes, and say "hey buddy, lets talk". "What is your real motive for meeting with this woman today? Are you dating other ladies right now? She is my sister in Christ and I care about her." Do you think that deceiving man is going to stick around after someone has his eyes on him like that? No way! He's either going to feel obligated to explain himself. Or, he will get annoyed and leave. This is why we need our church community. Support like that creates potential to change a heartbreaking situation into hope. Adopt a single sister or brother, won't you church? They need you!

So, like I said, I was vulnerable and didn't have anyone. And right in the midst of my vulnerability, I made stupid choices. Darron deceived me that weekend and after that, the only messages he sent me were filled with comments about his parents

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setting was probably very humiliating. And, his constant broken relationships with other women revealed the ongoing turmoil in his life. I think it played a huge role in his lashing out at me and in his becoming emotionally abusive. When Darron went after my humanity to hurt me, it was clear that he was blaming me for his circumstances. Darts were thrown and I just happened to be his latest target. He blocked me from facebook and never spoke to me again. Ten days later, I found out that he added pics on his facebook with the woman he had been serious with for some time. Even though she happened to be white, and his mom preferred her skin tone, her skin color didn't keep Darron from returning back to me. That's why racial stuff is so ignorant. It never makes sense because we are all a part of the human race. No matter how we try to label and define a person's humanity, we can't. It just is. Darron deceived me at the expense of his new girlfriend since "*their*" relationship wasn't important enough to acknowledge while he was with me. He also deceived his girlfriend by making her presence in his life insignificant as well which was very sad. All

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in all, Darron was selfish and only cared about Darron. His actions were not solely about racism or even about his mother. Those were just more layers covering up Darron's hardening outer shell he used to protect himself. His actions only verified his need to make better choices as a 50 years old man. Nothing else could ever cover that up. His two way deception put me at risk because I didn't have the option of knowing that he was already in a sexual relationship with someone else. At least, I could have walked away or at best, used protection to avoid STD's. I trusted him ignorantly. And he took advantage of that trust. It does take two to tango and I admit where I went wrong in believing him. But it only takes ONE person to lie about the things they don't want the other partner to know about. By refusing to tell me, he took that safety option from me.

Everything this man did to get back at me was completely selfish. I had never loved any man like I loved him. Yet, he treated me with such hatred and cruelty. He placed me, his own fiance at the time, between a rock and a hard place regarding

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many of his own issues. And when I handled the circumstances to the best of my abilities, he judged me further because my process did not meet his expectations. He wasn't showing me love.

Instead, he was reminding me that his love was conditional based on whether or not I would ignore and bypass the dark areas of his life that he didn't want love's light to reveal. This was generational. But, when his family, like so many other families, chose to ignore and bypass those dark areas within their own marriage, darkness was given an access pass to flourish throughout their household. It affected Darron's life, his sister, and the lives of others around them.

Even in my imperfection and my sin, I battled to carry that light within me because of Jesus Christ. But, even repentance couldn't provide a free pass to get away with my part in this situation. After my time with Darron, I was literally sick to my stomach. It wasn't a pregnancy sickness, it was a spiritual sickness. I vomited off and on for three whole months and didn't know why. As I reached out to the Lord in prayer, I was reminded that I was one

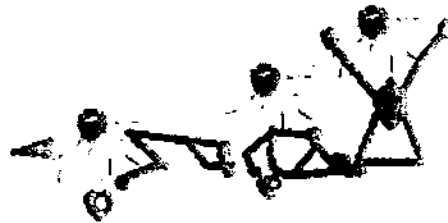
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of His daughters whom He dearly loved. He then taught me about the importance of the Holy Spirit. It was given to me as a gift that wasn't meant to be tossed around back and forth like a toy. It was a spiritual organ living in my body and needed to be taken care of and respected. Like alcohol devastates the liver, sin devastates the Holy Spirit. The Lord had to show me that I dragged the Holy Spirit into a sinful situation and the Holy Spirit will not be prostituted. When we practice sin on an ongoing basis, we drink a cup of devastation that has a poisonous aftertaste. It causes pain and takes a long time to get out of our system. I experienced a lot of dark days and nights. But, the Lord never gave up on me. His purpose for bringing Darron and I together was to expose the darkness present in both of our lives. He was hoping we both might refuse darkness by removing it from our relationship; walking instead into the light. But, the choice was ours to make individually. When Darron rejected the light, and I embraced it, I had to reach out for that light even if it meant walking alone.

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When two people truly love each other, they don't want the other person to be shoved into a dark place. They want them to be safe, away from the rocks, out of the darkness and protected.

Chapter 6



My Healing

Who was the woman that decided that it was ok to be Martha the Martyr after a really, really bad break up? I mean, there I was lying on my back in a cold medical room at the Doctors office with my feet in stirrups. I was getting poked and prodded while having my blood drawn for an HIV/Aids test, and I was peeing in a cup to get a specimen to verify non-pregnancy. I also had to lie

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back as a do dat machine thingy was inserted inside of me as part of a pap smear exam to rule out STD exposure. And where was he? Darron, I mean? He was off getting well wishes on his new engagement to the very woman he had deceived. Shute. I actually felt sorry for her because at least I was one step ahead of his game and knew about what he had done. My wait for verification on any virus would take a full year. I had just taken my first test and in six months, I would need to take a second. My first set of tests revealed no pregnancy and I was relieved. I also had no traces of STD's in my body and thanked the Lord for that first six months of blessings, undeserved forgiveness, and grace. But I wasn't out of the water yet. I had six more months to wait for the HIV/Aids second test to confirm whether or not I had contracted the virus. When Darron and I first met, we both did the responsible thing and got tested for safety reasons. He knew how I felt about honesty and safety. So when he deceived me anyways, he pretty much took a shot at my life. He and I didn't always have bad times. We also had some really great times together. During our

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time together, he and I would sit and chat about the fun times we remembered from our childhood. We both went roller skating at the same rink and never noticed each other. We both went to Lilac Lanes after school and ate their steak fries and drank soda. Yet, we never ran into each other. We both even cruised Riverside and made a bunch of ruckus with our friends shouting out to people in other cars back when we were in high school. And still, we never crossed each others paths. When we first started dating, he would take me to the local Y in a small city called Cusik and we would work out together. He would wrap my injured knee and I would sit and watch him shoot hoops until he was tired. And at night, we would sit and sing television jungles from The Brady Bunch, The Big Valley, Little House on the Prairie, and The Partridge family. He even sat with me one night and watched the corniest 70's movie that I loved called "Day of the Animals". A person would have to really love someone to sit and endure watching the scenes from that old movie. He and I were seventies kids so we laughed at the seventies outfits; the flare jeans, the men's unbuttoned shirts

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with big medallion necklaces, the visible chest hair, and corny comments all throughout the movie. During those times, we truly had fun together. I suppose this was why the big divide between us hurt me so badly. His jumping into a new relationship bothered me. The boundary issues were troubling, and so were his racial comments made to get back at me after we broke things off. That all hurt me. But what hurt me the most, and caused so much pain deep within, was that before the storm hit to separate us, he had become my best friend. That was something that he and I built together early on. It was also something that could have continued whether we chose to be together in our futures or not. He was truly a kind hearted man. He just had all of these issues that had piled up in his life that he didn't want to deal with. Instead of dealing with each issue one by one, he kept running and hiding from it all. If anyone found him out, he treated them as the enemy instead of as a loving friend that cared. When I asked him to communicate with me about the boundary issue, we could have solved it together. But when he refused and made me figure it out

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alone, I considered a pathway that was in the best interest of those youth at the school he taught at. He might not have been the bad guy at the school but he was on the borderline of having the “choice” to be right or wrong as a teacher. If this situation didn't get corrected, what about the next more sinister guy who was given the same access to encourage his students to ignore important boundaries? That was my reasoning for responding the way I did. But when I became his enemy, he went a little too far in trying to get revenge. He went after my emotional and physical health, my safety, and my humanity.

Markers:



As an adult, I am starting to recognize that some people live life as if there are no limits on what they can do to hurt the people in their lives. As believers in Christ or simply as people who just want to treat others with kindness, we need to set markers in relationships. If you find yourself criticizing something about the other person that they cannot change like a visual disability, cancer, shorter hair, the way they look first thing in the morning, their skin color, their height, maybe their metabolism that leans towards weight gain, or water weight that they have to work on controlling how it sits on ones body, their facial features, the shape of their eyes, their shoe sizes, their fingers and toes, the shape of their head, their real breast size, their signs and symptoms from diabetes, etc..., their male body size that might be

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smaller in height and build, etc...their race or nationality. These things are the markers that should be off limits. If you use them against another person, you have gone too far. So when you think of blurting out things that the other person cannot change about themselves, don't cross the line. Realize that you are at the point of no return. It's best to walk away for awhile if you have to. If you keep crossing the line, you might lose a good person for your life forever.

Even though Darron's new life without me was none of my business, I wasn't going to remain silent like so many other ladies have been taught to do in the past. Society calls it "lady like" and respectable to bow down gracefully and keep quiet when we are mistreated in relationships. But silence means supporting that person in their ongoing deception, mistreatment, and sometimes abuse towards others. Especially when it comes to another person's health and safety. The only reason why people cheat and do the horrendous things they do in relationships is simply

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because we (kind hearted and loving women and good men out there too) let them. Certain men, for example, are going to go off and have mistresses as long as they think the mistress or side chic won't say anything. But when did we ladies become the house managers of other peoples dirt? In my situation, I wanted to be the humble little Christian sweetheart that walked away quietly, trusted in God, and knew He would "one day" deal with the issues I experienced with Darron. That's all sweet and flowery if I was a robot lady with no feelings. But I did have feelings. And I was pissed off. His putting me at risk left me in danger which went beyond any normal form of relationship revenge. For days, I struggled with what I needed to do about the situation. I knew I needed to let him go and finally took the situation to the Lord in prayer. I was expecting the Lord to give me some type of step by step action plan. But instead, He only gave me a few simple words which were:

"My child, you have to feel to heal."

The Lord had blessed me with some really good friends to stand

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by me during that time while I was hurting. I even had a special friend at the time who went walking with me and let me cry it all out without judgment. She wasn't a believer sitting in the church pews Sunday after Sunday. But, she was the best type of person to be there for me. She had made some mistakes in her life that would make anyone blush. But her understanding was just like that of Christs. She knew what it was like to be judged and knew how to extend the very forgiveness she once needed to receive herself. But as time went on and I was still not completely healed, every other message around me was pushing me to "get over it" and "move on". I even had one man criticize me for the time it was taking me to heal from my pain. That's when I realized that no one can rush a person through their pain. It doesn't matter whether or not it takes twelve months to three years. A person needs to expand their wings and take the time they need to heal. Once healed, they will be able to fly, and even soar and start again. When we rush another persons healing time, or rush them into new relationships, we stifle them into making other bad decisions

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which hurt them even more than the pain they were already feeling. The Lord never once expected me to go on in life without feeling the pain of what I had experienced. And when I finally let go of that robot/machine status, I was finally able to cry. And when I cried everything out, and gave everything to the Lord, I kept on crying. After awhile, I started feeling like my broken heart was slowly starting to mend. All of the pain, anger, and hurt started flowing out of me through my tears. And new hope began entering in with every breath I began to take. When I started feeling better, I began to go walking for exercise. I then started purchasing clothing items that would bring more light to my appearance once again. I then joined this wonderful ladies Bible study group at a local church. I know that some churches are very impersonal when it comes to Bible study and home life and issues. They are open to sweet wonderful inspiring messages. But, they don't want anyone talking about anything personal. That was always a no, no. But this group of ladies were very different. We would get into a small circle, go over our Bible study questions,

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and chat about how it pertained to our personal lives. Some responses caused crocodile tears. But every response caused healing. There was no judgment and no gossip afterwards. We were just there to support each other.

I was constantly praying for restoration between my ex and I. But the Lord had a different goal for my life. Instead of restoring my broken relationship, he restored my soul. Bible study caused me to not only heal, but my soul was literally repairing itself from the inside out. It felt wonderful. And when I got strong enough, I sent a facebook message to Darron's new fiance telling her exactly what had occurred between he and I while he was dating her. It wasn't about revenge. If Jesus took care of Jezebel in 1st and 2nd Kings in the Bible after she plotted and planned against a man that wouldn't sell her his land, he would definitely take care of my experiences with Darron and everyone involved. The Lord never leaves any stones unturned. He deals with those that spitefully hurt us in His own timing and in His own way. This situation was about our bodies, what we are passing on to others, and safety

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factors. We are living in a new world so we have to be responsible for others around us. I shared that I got tested and felt that she might also want to do the same for her own safety. I didn't want to make matters worse. I just didn't want one more person in this world to get away with that type of behavior. These viruses are real, and even though I was blessed to come out without receiving anything, it's never fair to intentionally put other people at risk. I wanted to make sure she was aware of all that he initiated in his pursuit of spending time with me and I sent her his emails he sent to me as verification. I also let him know that I warned her to get checked based on the reckless life he was living. I never expected a response and never spoke to him again. But I have to say that the greatest step in my healing came from exposing the truth my ex wanted to keep hidden. Hiding all that he had done, allowed him to victimize me just like his parents victimized him over the years. I was his sounding board as he blamed his first wife for this and that. And after we broke apart, his next relationship will probably be the sounding board as I am to blame for his latest this

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or that situation. And so on, and so on, and so on. I have a feeling that this time around, Darron will be forced to live a changed life. In order to keep up his dishonest front, he will have to stay on his toes. If he doesn't, the world he created will start to unravel again. And when it comes tumbling down, and it will, he will have no one to blame but himself.

When we think of generational curses within family lines, we always think that the behaviors will stop when one family member decides to change. But sometimes it takes sincere prayer from outsiders who refuse to replay generational tapes certain families have grown accustomed to in order to initiate new beginnings and change.

Like I said before, we are all a part of the human race. And Darron will always be my brother in Christ. I saw him pray a prayer of salvation and I know he meant it. I also got to spend some quality alone time moments with Darron that were protected and untainted by the rest of the world or by family influence. The time we spent together will never be forgotten. It was the one

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thing that could not be stolen and will forever be something that that no one can ever take away. I loved him in spite of everything and only wanted to see him happy. Even if that happiness was found with someone else. Real friends tell the truth even when the other person can't see it or even when the truth hurts. I tried to be a good friend by keeping that truth front and center in our relationship. I said "no" to his behavior even as the cost of saying no meant losing him forever.

It took me two years to work through the pain of a six month or more relationship. And it took me more time to forgive this person fully without ever seeing him again or hearing the words "I'm sorry". When I knew that I could see him on the street one day and smile, I knew that I had truly been set free from anything meant to harm me. And now that I am back to myself, I can honestly say that it feels good to be completely healed.

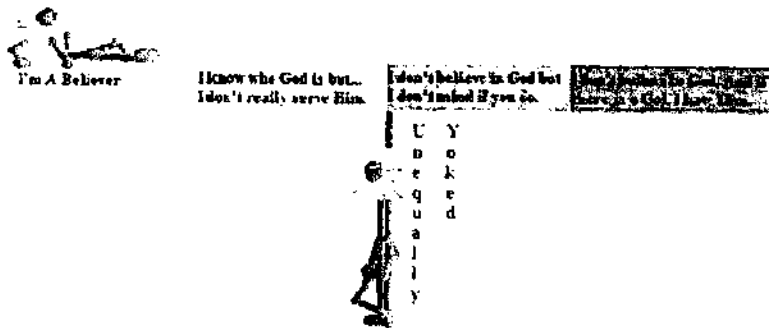
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God never said that He causes "some things" to work together for good of those who love Him. Instead He said,

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose."

Romans 8:28

Chapter 7



The Anti, the Un, and the Reverse

It's been one year and 13 months since that last painful relationship experience. By God's grace, I am truly living a healed life. The Bible does say that the older are to teach the younger . So in this Chapter, I would like to show single ladies exactly what to look for in finding relationships that honor Christ. Time to listen up! 2nd Corinthians 6:14 says "*Be ye not unequally yoked*

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together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"

Basically, when we see the term unequally yoked, we need to teach ourselves exactly what **un** really means. Un means the reverse of something. "It is the prefix, meaning **not** or **opposite**" according dictionary.reference.com. When we separate the word un from equally, we can easily see that the Bible is giving us clear instructions. We are not simply to **do** the opposite thing that the unbeliever does in our every day lives. But we are to **be** the opposite as well. We are to be equally yoked with believers instead of walking around being unequally yoked with unbelievers. During my Sunday school days, I remember the teachers using the analogy of a man and a woman pulling two oxen that were strapped together side by side down a road. If one person stops pulling, the other person is left to carry the additional weight of the two animals which is not really fair. I like that analogy and it does paint a long lasting picture for a pre-teen who

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is just learning about Christ-like relationships. But there is so much more that needs to be taught about that analogy because after all, "*it is all about the wait*". It is about the **w-e-i-g-h-t** we carry in life as well as the **w-a-i-t** to find the right person to help us pull the oxen down the road in our pathway of life. In understanding this process, I had to first figure out what a **Believer in Christ** is and what an **unbeliever outside of Christ** is. This is huge because if we as believers don't recognize the difference between the two, we can easily get deceived. I've been there. I've lived it, and have definitely been deceived in the past. Let's start by getting a good look at the unbeliever according to the Bible's perspective.

The Un Believer

In Exodus Chapter 5 verses 1 and two, we find Pharaoh's response to Moses and Aaron.

They told him that the Lord told them to tell Pharaoh to let His people go so that they might worship Him (hold a festival in His

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honor in the desert) in the wilderness.

Pharaoh then said "Who is the Lord that I should obey Him and let Israel go?"

"I do not know the Lord and I will not let Israel go." said Pharaoh.

Basically, Pharaoh didn't know the Lord. He wasn't going to listen to the Lord's demands. Therefore, a reversal or (un) of the Lord's instruction occurred. This is also true with anyone who does not believe in Christ. John 10:27 says " My sheep hear my voice; I know them. And they follow Me." It's just that simple. The reason why I have such an easy time conversing with people of other faiths is simply because as a believer, I get it. I don't go around demonizing people. I just know that they don't know Jesus. They don't hear His voice. Jesus doesn't know them and they don't know Him either. Therefore, they don't or won't follow Him. You know, it took me years to learn this. But, if you want to know whether or not a person is a true believer, just check out those three things. Do they hear His voice? Does Christ actually know them? Or do they share their testimony or daily experiences while

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knowing Jesus? And, do they follow Him? Do they read the Bible? Are they involved in hearing His word? Do their footsteps lead them on the pathway towards Christ? In considering these questions, I found that it is better not to scan the person or grill them mercilessly about it. Just take your time. Look and see about that person's life. And even before looking into their life, I think it's best to look into our own lives. We need to make sure we are living in such a way that we can hear His voice. I know that when I entered the relationships I got involved with, I was hearing God's precious voice but purposely blocked it out. I knew the relationships I was in were not leading me towards Christ. But, since I didn't want to lose the men I was involved with, I pushed His voice aside. The problem with pushing His voice aside is that you lose the closeness Jesus has to offer. You lose wisdom and information He is trying to impart to you for your protection. He doesn't want us wandering off in the wilderness without His protection. Believe me, there are men that will leave you somewhere on a cold ground naked, uncovered, and lost in

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Siberia. But, because God loves you so much, He will hear you crying from afar off. He will run to you and cover you with the warmth of His love. He will cherish you because that's what a Father's love is suppose to do. It is His wish to carry you out of any dark cold place. He wants to protect you, guide you, and keep you safe resting under His umbrella. But He can't express His love towards us as His daughters if we push Him away and tune out by refusing to listen to the wisdom He is trying to impart to us.

I Know Who God Is But, I Don't Really Serve Him

These are the type of men I run into all of the time. They know about God, and will even go to church to learn more about Him. But for some reason, it sometimes takes this big lightening jolt type of conversion to knock them off of the fence they were

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straddling before making their decision to finally walk with God. Lets look at a conversion where an unbeliever is coming to know Christ. The Saul to Paul example. In Acts Chapter 9 verse 1, "Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples." As you read further on in this story, you will see that eventually, Saul went the other way. He went from being an unbeliever named Saul to a believer fired up for the Lord where his name was later changed to Paul. This conversion did not occur without divine intervention and God's personal presence and visitation into his life.

"Saul asked the high Priests/leaders for letters to imprison any disciples in Jerusalem. He was on a journey and had a mission to get as many believers as he could whether they be men or women. "So, while he was on his way in that (wrong, anti-, un) direction, he had a personal encounter with Jesus.

Acts 9; verse 3

As he neared Damascus on his journey, a light from heaven flashed where? Around him, so it encircled him. He fell to the

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ground and heard a voice say "Saul, Saul why do you persecute Me?"

God kind of freaked Saul out a little bit because he didn't seem so tough and threatening at that moment. "Who are you,Lord?" Saul asked. Saul didn't say "who are you" did he? Instead, he asked "Who are you Lord?" So, we know that deep down, Saul, whose name was later changed to Paul, knew exactly who the Lord was. He just hadn't yet had his personal encounter with God until this moment. Saul knew he was dealing with a Superior being (before) he built a personal relationship with Him.

Then God said "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting."

God then said, "now get up and go into the city. and you will be told what you must do."

So after God verified who He was to Saul, and Saul acknowledged that God was truly God the Father, God gave him immediate instructions.

The men traveling with Saul were speechless. That shows how powerful this conversion and conversation was.

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The Bible says that they heard the sound but did not see anyone. This was confirmation that this conversion moment was strictly tailor made for Saul as he was transforming into one of the Lord's greatest disciples named Paul.

Paul's example is a message to women and to men that are believers that God will personally present himself before all men so that they might have a choice to acknowledge and serve Him *or* not. We can trust that God will visit our loved ones when we pray and ask Him to. We can feel confident that He does hear our prayers.

We also have to realize that it's not our job to step in and wear ourselves down trying to play the God role. When we do pray, and our loved one's continue to reject the Lord's prompting like Saul in the story could have done, we need to leave them in the hands of God. I learned that I need to do the same in dating relationships. I use to spend so much time trying to encourage my boyfriends to walk with Christ. And the funny thing is, they knew what their stance was much more than I ever knew mine. They

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didn't compromise their disbelief in God. Yet, now that I look back, I can see how much I compromised my belief in Him to remain in relationship with them *On Their Terms*. This is what needs to change in our behavior as woman who are trying to walk out our faith while dating and praying for a husband to enter into our lives. We need to be as sure about our devotion to living out Gods will as certain men are in living outside of it. We need to take a stand and stick to it.

I personally decided to finally take my stand for Christ after a whole year of being single again. I started building a conversation with this particular man that was very interested in me. There use to be a time where I was so grateful for someones interest in me. But this time proved to be different. We were having a great conversation at first. He even invited me to go to dinner with him. But as we continued to talk, he started swearing and making rude comments about off the wall issues. He was referring to women as being bitches (meaning female dogs = animals) and talking about their having attitudes when they were on their periods and

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so on. Talking to him became almost unbearable. It got so bad that I literally got a headache. I knew he was not someone I wanted to spend time with. I also knew he wasn't a true believer. It wasn't his swearing etc., that got me turned off to him. It had to do with the simple fact that he didn't hear God's voice so he wasn't one of His. He didn't know Jesus, and he certainly wasn't following Him down a positive pathway in the conversations he wanted to have with me. I then quickly canceled our dinner date and told him I wasn't interested. Now, here's a strange twist every believing woman should be aware of. Since this guy knew I was a believer, he tried to appeal to my faith in his attempt to somehow reel me in. He mentioned that even Jesus had a few good men that He disciplined. And I responded by saying "Yes He did. But remember, *He* disciplined the men himself. It's not my responsibility to draw a man to the Lord when He's the only one that can draw them." After that, this man finally left me alone. In the past, I use to go out with those type of unsaved guys knowing at some point that they were not walking at all with Christ. This

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time around, things have changed. I now refuse to mercy or ministry date anyone. If they are not saved, the church will always be an option for them if they desire to get involved. I will share the gospel in group settings with fellow church members. I might even have to hang with people that are unsaved in work settings involving team building lunches etc... But as far as one on one dating goes, I have become very careful. Even the time frame with an unsaved man wanting to date is an issue. Everyone has to set their own time span when spending time with unbelieving men wanting to date. But my time frame is now down to three hours max. I am willing to invite a man to a church function that might last an hour and a half to two hours. I might even go to have a sandwich or a bite to eat with that person as well. But they will always be considered just a friend in my eyes. If they ever decide to walk with Christ, that's a plus. There's another one for the Kingdom of Heaven. But if they don't, they are not obligated and neither am I. Friendship will always be all there will ever be between us. My new goals these days are to

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spend my time at home or on my hobbies instead of spending time building a non-Christ oriented fruitless relationship. Our time as believing women has to be spent promoting who we say we believe in. When we say we believe in God, we have to start promoting Him in our relationships and by our actions. We have to be as bold in promoting Christ as some of the female entertainers are today in promoting their belief in the occult through their music.

The Believers Range Grid

When we, as believing women, date unsaved men, this is the range in which they can go even when they seem sweet, nice, and unbelieving.

The **I'm A Believer Section** means I am born again, I am not perfect but I do my best to serve the Lord. I am His Child, I belong to Him, and my destiny is in the Kingdom of God forever.

The I Know Who God Is But...I Don't Really Serve Him

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Section means I am lukewarm about my feelings for Christ. I know who God is. I claim to be a Christian, I'll even go to church every now and then. But I am the master in my own life. I do what I want to do and don't follow any rules except my own.

The I Don't Believe in God But I Don't Mind If You Do

Section means exactly what it says. This person doesn't believe in God and doesn't care whether or not you have a faith. Just don't talk to them about how you feel about your faith. They might have their own belief in another deity, etc.. But when it comes to God, they don't believe, they don't agree with it, and they don't want to hear it.

The I don't believe in God. And if there is a God, I hate Him

Section also means exactly what it says. This person is very anti-God and may become antagonistic in a discussion where God is mentioned. There is an extreme version of everything in life. This particular person may also have an extreme that can lead to

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satanic worship and preference.

While I realize there is no use in dating a person based on our differences, I tend to be a good listener and I like to hear these people have to say. I often find that a few have experienced hardships due to one or two jack asses within the church who ran around claiming to be true believers but lived a life at home that verified they were not. These so called believers were abusive, cruel, and have used the Bible to justify behaviors that have nothing to do with Christ and God's love. Their negative influence was so detrimental in the lives of some that they turned away from God completely. Whenever I come across these stories of extreme abuse these now adults have suffered at the hands of few of these wolves in sheep's clothing, it has broken my heart. I believe this is the very stumbling block Jesus talks about when He says ;

“But Jesus called the children to Him and said “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”

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Luke 18:16

What The Bible Really Says About Anyone That Hurts A

Child:

“ But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.”

Matthew 18:6

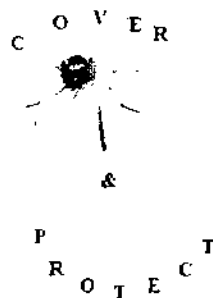
It was never God's intention to see these children or families suffer through abuse at the hands of anyone claiming to know Him or to be used to do anything according to His will.

Sometimes I think abusers mistreat their prey just to take away their innocence because they feel that at one time in their own lives, someone took their innocence. These people want to block children from ever trusting in the love and protection that comes from God. They obviously don't reverence or believe in God the way they claim because they are arrogant enough to put their hands on children without considering the repercussions coming their way.

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Even after passing on this information, the discussion tends to move to their wanting explanations about the world's ills and why God didn't do this or that to change things. I always admit that I don't have every answer because I am still learning about the world and what makes it tick. But, what I do share is that God loves these people and always has. My only sadness is that I might not get to spend eternity with so many of these people because of the differences in what we believe. This tends to be my opportunity to share the gospel if the person is open to hearing it.

Chapter 8



The Covering

What is the Covering? The covering is a faith covering of Gods protection surrounding our lives. When it comes to dating, I can only truthfully speak for myself. Yet, I know I am not alone when I say that so many believing women like myself, have not fully been prepared to stand for our faith in Jesus Christ. We have listened to Bible stories about Queen Esther, Ruth and Boaz, and Rachel and Jacob. And although those stories have significance in giving us strength and direction, they don't always equip us with knowledge on how to deal with what we encounter as believers in today's world. Today is our day to stand and understand the

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reasons for our faith and our hope. We really need to expand our horizons within the scriptures to learn about relationship deception, sin, and the outcomes when we fall away from God's umbrella. We already know that there are good men out there that love Jesus and are committed to doing His good will. Those are the men we want to enter into our lives. But we have to be able to recognize them when they cross our paths and appreciate their presence just as they need to appreciate ours. As we are sifting through the masses in the meantime, we need to be equipped and aware of both good and bad intentions. We need to know and accept that there are men and women out there that are actually despicable and will pre-plan dating situations to our harm. One good example of this is the full story of Sampson and how he came to encounter Delilah in the The Book of Judges Chapter 13. Society sometimes considers this story to be one of the greatest love stories ever. But, our Bible clearly tells us that this was a story about lust, deceit, and manipulation for money. Delilah didn't care two cents about Sampson. Love definitely had nothing

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to do with it. Yet, she made love to him as if he mattered in order to get something from Sampson. In this case, it was information about the source of his strength. God's daughters need to recognize this difference. If we don't recognize the charade and miss it, our heart will get crushed under the feet of an uncaring person. I know Sampson was a man. But he definitely had feelings. I am sure that his heart was torn by the deception he experienced from the woman he loved and thought he could trust. Sampson's parents tried to warn him to stay away from these women and their people but he would not listen. And, eventually, his attraction towards the Philistine women led him to his death. It's hard to imagine that a person you fall in love with and trust could set you up for a situation so extreme as death. But, since I saw first hand what being put at risk was like, I know it's actually possible. Sampson's father in law, who was a Philistine, just assumed that Sampson hated his wife. He then gave her to one of his wedding attendants without even consulting Sampson. He then tried to remedy the situation by offering Sampson his

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younger daughter instead. Who meddles in a situation like that? Dysfunctional parents do. And who listens to their sometimes ignorant demands? The dysfunctional children they raise. A similar situation involving family ties happened between Rachel, Leah, and Jacob in the Bible. And this is something that we as believers need to be aware of. We just don't get into a relationship with one person. Their family, their history, and their spiritual walk or lack of is involved and will affect our lives if we are not prepared . We need to recognize and discern spirits that are incompatible with the Holy Spirit that dwells within us. When thinking of my past experience with Darron, I came to realize that he had the choice to walk away from his family generational issues. But instead, he chose to walk towards continual patterns of victimization. When we met, I was the sounding board for all of the "this and that" complaints he had about his ex-wife and previous girlfriend. After we broke up, I am confident that I became the "this and that" target for everything that took place in our relationship. And as the pattern continues, I am sure the next

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person will be blamed, and so on and so on. This is why it is so important to take the time in relationships to see and observe which way the person you are dating might go in dealing with generational issues. If they refuse to get help or refuse to walk away from destructive patterns where they need to acknowledge their own involvement in past relationships, it should become a warning sign to you. It should also give you time to walk away from relationship building without getting too involved or hurt. So, what are the steps in getting prepared in our relationships as believers and daughters in Christ? Before you start to date, make sure you:

1. Know Without a Shadow of a doubt who Jesus Is

John 3:16 states that **Jesus is the Son of God-**

“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life.”

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He's Our Mediator

*“For there is one God and one mediator between God and men,
the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all
men—the testimony given in it's proper time.”*

1 Timothy 2:5 and 6

2. Know what His Purpose Was and Still Is today

Isaiah 61 reminds us that ...He came to:

preach the good news to the poor,

to bind up the brokenhearted

to proclaim freedom for the captives

and release from darkness for the prisoners

to proclaim the year of the Lords favor

and the day of vengeance of our God

to comfort all who mourn

and provide for those who grieve in Zion

to bestow on them a crown of beauty

instead of ashes

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*the oil of gladness
instead of mourning
and a garment of praise
instead of a spirit of despair*

He Came to Be Our Salvation and to Leave Us His Holy Spirit
Matthew 28:18-20 states,

“Then Jesus came to them and said, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, til the very end of the age.”

3. Know who You Are In Christ

Just so you know, the Bible says ... “whoever touches you touches the apple of His eye” Zechariah 2:8.

Therefore, you are the apple of His eye.

Jeremiah 1:5 also says “Before I formed you in the womb I

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knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”

Therefore, as His child, you are someone Jesus knew before you even entered your mothers womb. He set you apart from the world and He appointed you.

4. **Know what His Purpose and Plan is for your life**
Jeremiah 29:11 states: “For I know the plans I have for you: declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.”

And as you grow in the knowledge of Christ by reading His word;

1. **Sift through what is out there** and enter through the narrow gates in your dating process.
2. **Don't travel down any of those dating paths mentioned.** They only lead to heartache because they are deceptive. Their only goal is to devastate you or take you out in one way or

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another.

3. **Take your time** to date the person you choose for at least 6 months to a year before agreeing to get engaged. Remember that it's so important to slow down and get to know each other. Allow time to really be that friend that lets the two of you really see each other. When I met Darron, I prayed and asked the Lord to show me who he was. It took a lot of time, stress, heartache, and a year and a half to see exactly who this man was. But, I did ask and did receive the whole truth about Darron. Therefore, I can never say that God didn't answer my prayers.

4. **Keep your body out of it until marriage becomes your outcome.** In my last two relationships mentioned, I gave my whole body because it was mainly what they desired as part of our relationship. But was it what I wanted without marriage between the two of us? No. I had only dated three men in my lifetime. The first one was nothing serious nor physical. But with both Al and Darron, my body was very much involved. And, even after I shared this gift of my body with them, because our bodies

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are gifts to be shared with our husbands, I left both relationships empty handed.

Darron still found it easy to watch me plan our wedding while he had already started building a marriage nest with the woman he eventually married. So my body meant nothing to him and there were no guarantees. Society tries to make daughters of Christ feel anxious and worried as if we will lose the man we love if we don't give in to sex and live by someone else's rules and desires. But, I learned that any man who conditionally demands a lifestyle in spite of my desire to walk faithfully with God, was never mine in the first place. He has no respect for me and definitely has no reverence towards my faith. If he was never mine through marriage, then my body should never be shared with him at any time. Giving in to keep a man in our life is another lie from the enemy. These men are not going to die of sexual starvation. Please! The truth is, our time spent in building a friendship can be enough for one man. They can wait for marriage to share a lifetime of uninhibited sex that involves love and commitment

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and so can we. Remember that when they are serious about marrying, and know the two of you will have a lifetime of intimacy, they won't mind waiting. When anyone tries to rush you into it, it's not because you are so sexy or irresistible. It's because they are only looking for something temporary. This is why God wants us to remain under His umbrella. He's not trying to steal our opportunities for happiness. Rather, this loving God of ours is trying to cover and protect us in the midst of a world that wants us uncovered, heartbroken, and exposed. Our Lord doesn't want us to get lost in darkness. Instead, He wants to lead us out of darkness so that we can remain in His glorious light. Giving us direction is a privilege He honors as our Shepherd.

I know some men out there make us feel unworthy when they dump us mercilessly or deceive us in harsh ways. In spite of what they do, just know that God loves you so much. He allowed your presence to stand in the midst of the unloving. And when their unloving behavior comes back upon them one day, they will have to deal with

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someone who doesn't treat them as well as you did. There will never be another you. They will have to ask the next person to do what came naturally from you out of the genuineness of your heart. Women of God, don't ever forget that God gave you that.

You will be the gem they will search and search to find but will never again obtain because they didn't recognize or appreciate what they had until it was gone. All that they will ever find is little fragments of the gem stone you are. God made you valuable which is something no one can ever take away.

God wants to continue to be the guiding compass that leads you into a life of hope, relationship success, and into a brighter future with Him. I lost my way in finding a comfortable place to rest my love in these most recent years. When I finally placed the love I had to give into the Lords hands, I realized God was the one Man that could always be trusted. He would never dump me for another, throw me aside, nor deceive me. He loved me then, and continues to prove His love for me even today. He is the

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everlasting love I had been searching for all along.

The Compass

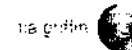
*We all need a place
to rest our love
It's a love freely given
and comes from above
Its willing to be shared
with one person forever
it doesn't judge, but naturally
makes another want to do better
Its pure love that's sincere
it cares, it's everlasting
it commits itself, it's trustworthy
it's not temporary or passing*

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This love has a compass
purchased by paying a price
the owner of the compass
Is none other than Jesus Christ
It's chained around His neck
over the chest to never depart
if love ever loses it's way or gets lost
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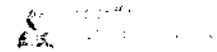
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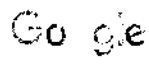
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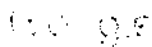
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